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GENERAL

1. London Embassy reports basic British position toward USSR:

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The US Embassy in London reports that, although it is impossible to predict what Prime Minister Churchill may say in the Washington talks about USSR-Western relations, he and

Foreign Secretary Eden have with them a paper, approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, outlining a position which British officials feel is close to that of the United States.

The Embassy reports that this paper views relations with Russia in three stages: (1) the current phase, in which agreement is impossible and during which the West should build up its strength while keeping channels of negotiation open; (2) the period after "parity of strength" is reached, in which limited agreements may be possible; and (3) a period in which the Soviet empire will start crumbling because of its own internal weaknesses.

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WESTERN EUROPE

4. German church leaders disturbed over Niemoeller trip to Moscow:

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Protestant Church leaders in West Germany, mixed in their reaction to Pastor Niemoeller's current visit to Moscow, point out that the trip will be a substantial Soviet propaganda victory

even if the USSR goes no further than to talk about concessions such as the release of German prisoners of war.

Church officials, wholly surprised by the suddenness of Niemoeller's trip, are not hopeful of great results, but feel that the average churchman with relatives still held in the USSR will be enthusiastic. Niemoeller critics are more than ever convinced that, unwittingly or not, he is playing the Soviet game. Bishop Dibelius, the head of the Protestant Church, although agreeing partially with criticism of the visit, wishes to refrain from public censure in order not to publicize church differences.

Comment: Niemoeller's trip coincides with current Soviet pressure to prevent West German integration with the West. His public statements since the end of the war, particularly his neutralist views, have aroused considerable criticism. In April 1951, after a rebuke from Bishop Dibelius, he stated that he would refrain from political utterances. He has nevertheless continued to speak, with the support of a minority of Evangelical Church leaders.

5. Ireland rejects Mutual Security Act terms:

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Ireland is not prepared to accept the terms of the Mutual Security Act because of the implied involvement in collective Western defense.

Although Irish officials hope that projects already approved under ECA will be carried out without a new agreement, they are prepared to sacrifice the financial benefits involved, amounting to about one million dollars, rather than sign the MSA agreement.

The Embassy believes that pressure on the Irish Government would be undesirable in view of possible "internal political repercussions."

Comment: The Irish Government replied to the original submission of the MSA agreement with a statement on Partition -- the perennial excuse for not joining Western defense plans -- and a renewed request to buy US arms. The amount of money involved is evidently not enough to make the Irish Government run the risk of domestic political attack for appearing to violate its neutrality policy.

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